

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF MEETING OF  
THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICHESTER HELD IN THE ASSEMBLY ROOM,  
THE COUNCIL HOUSE, NORTH STREET, CHICHESTER  
ON WEDNESDAY 8 DECEMBER 2021 AT 2.00PM**

- PRESENT:** The Mayor (Councillor J Hughes)  
Councillors Apel, Barrie, Carter, Corfield, Dignum, Gaskin, Harry,  
Gershater, Sharp, Scicluna and Quail
- APOLOGIES:** Councillors Bell, C Hughes, K Hughes and Plowman
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk, Mayoral/Administrative Assistant  
Member Services Support Officer, The Mayor's Chaplain  
West Sussex County Councillor Simon Oakley and a member of the public
- ABSENT:** Councillors Joy and Lishman

Members took a moment to remember the late Michael Woolley who had recently passed away.

**46 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

As recorded above

It was noted that West Sussex County Councillor Jeremy Hunt had sent apologies.

**47 MINUTES OF COUNCIL**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on 29 September 2021 (Pages 80-86) and Council-in-Committee held on 6 October 2021 (Pages 92-93) having been printed and circulated be approved, adopted and signed as a correct record.

**48 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor mentioned the following:

- (a) The forthcoming retirement of the Mayor's Secretary, who had been employed by the City Council for over 22 years. He joined with members to wish her well for the future and thanked her for her loyalty and hard work.
- (b) He welcomed back Councillor Gershater after his absence due to ill health
- (c) Councillor Corfield was also welcomed as a new member to the Council.
- (d) The Mayor was disappointed to note that it appeared that the City Council had not been acknowledged for their financial support with regards to the Rotary Christmas tree. The Town Clerk responded that he had observed a small note of recognition of the City Council displayed.

**49 PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no questions from members of the public being residents of the City pursuant to Appendix 1 of Chichester City Council's Standing Orders (September 2020).

50 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

(a) Planning and Conservation Working Group

It was moved by Councillor Quail, Vice-Chairman of the Committee, that the Minutes of the meetings held on 14 October and 2021 and 11 November 2021 be approved and adopted.

Councillor Quail, referring to the minutes mentioned the following:

- Pavements – separate motion
- Whitehouse Farm – developers had declined to set up an ISG for phase II of the development.
- YMCA would allocate a medical provision but as yet undefined
- Noise Issues – Councillor Sharp had recently attended a meeting to discuss this and minutes had been circulated to members

Councillor Quail commented that members of the Planning Working Group were vigilant on inappropriate signage in the City Centre and were also urging the exploring of all opportunities of sustainable development.

Councillor Quail also mentioned the Neighbourhood Plan and the revised membership of the Steering Group and the engagement of schools and young people in the process.

A27 - update on 3 November 2021 and Highways England were exploring 4 Options for which more detail was awaited.

Whitehouse Farm new primary school had been approved by Chichester District Council when the 500<sup>th</sup> dwelling was in place.

Southern Access route would not be discussed publicly until a full planning application had been received. The timetable had slipped and the outline planning application would be unlikely to be received before the new year.

The Southern Gateway review had been discussed by cabinet and a press release would be forthcoming.

To consider the following recommendation:

(i) Pavements in the City Centre – **Minute 58 refers**

It was RECOMMENDED to Full Council that WSCC and CDC allocate appropriate funding to enable a suitable and reasonably priced resurfacing to take place in the city centre with no further delay to ensure the safety and well-being of residents and other users of the city centre.

Councillor Dignum addressed the meeting and wished to highlight that Chichester District Council were not the Highways Authority and should not therefore be considered as a funding contributor for pavements. Councillor Apel supported this.

It was therefore proposed, seconded put to the vote and RESOLVED that Chichester District Council be removed from the original recommendation.

Councillor Dignum as the portfolio holder, referring to the Southern Gateway, said that after debate the recommendations had been supported unanimously by CDC. He said that negotiations with Stagecoach needed to be completed regarding transfer to a new site on Terminus Road. The District Council would then decide the future of the Basin Road car park, the bus garage and bus station. Clarification as to the location of bus stops needed to be discussed and agreed with Stagecoach.

The Police station and playing fields were also mentioned. The old School was being demolished and negotiations for a new health centre were continuing.

Councillor Quail asked about the visioned process for the development of the Southern Gateway. Councillor Dignum responded that, although there was no longer one developer for this complicated project, individual sites, although developing separately, would still need to be part of the master plan.

It was RESOLVED that the original motion put by Councillor Quail, that the Minutes of the meetings held on 14 October 2021 and 11 November 2021 be approved and adopted.

(b) Finance Working Group

It was moved by Councillor Scicluna, as Chairman of the Committee, that the Minutes of the meetings held on 19 October 2021, 28 October 2021 and 25 November 2021 be approved and adopted.

To consider the following recommendations:

(i) Neighbourhood Plan – request from the Steering Group for funding for Administrative Support – **Minute 58 refers**

It was RECOMMENDED to Full Council that:  
Administrative support for the new Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (post 8 November 2021) be provided for up to 12 months, or up to the amount of £3600, to be funded from CIL receipts.

It was further RECOMMENDED to Full Council that:  
The recruitment process commences once the new Steering Group had identified the support that was required and suitable candidates for consideration.

It was RECOMMENDED to Full Council that:

(ii) City Council Budget – **Minute 66 refers**

- a. the City Council budget for 2022/2023 be £851,965 resulting in a Precept Demand of £737,615 and a Band D Council Tax payment of £64.07 (an increase of 2.1p per week); an overall increase of 1.79% on the Precept - providing the Draft Tax Base remained unchanged at 11,512.10;
- b. the Earmarked Reserves Balances to 18 November 2021 be approved;
- c. the updated Planned Maintenance Programme for 2019-2029 be noted;
- d. the Schedule of Fees and Charges for 2022/2023 be approved.

Councillor Scicluna expressed thanks to the Deputy Town Clerk for her good work in preparing the City Council budget.

(iii) Update on New Homes Bonus Approvals – **Minute 67 refers**

It was RECOMMENDED to Full Council to accept the terms of the City Council's New Homes Bonus allocations for 2021/22 as outlined in the letter from the District Council dated 8 November 2021.

(iv) Staffing Report – **Minute 75 refers**

It was RECOMMENDED to Full Council that the Pension Strain Costs as reported be met by the City Council.

Councillor Apel congratulated the City Council on the Remembrance Day Service and was sorry to have not been able to be there.

It was RESOLVED that the original motion put by Councillor Scicluna, that the Minutes of the meetings held on 19 October 2021, 28 October 2021 and 25 November 2021, be approved and adopted. Councillor Dignum abstained from the voting.

(c) Community Affairs Committee

It was moved by Councillor Apel, as Chairman of the Committee, that the Minutes of the meetings held on 4 October 2021 and 15 November 2021, be approved and adopted.

Councillor Apel commenting on Minute 29 – Royal Mail, said that the delivery of post had been extremely erratic; the Mayor endorsed this by saying that he had only received his agenda papers for this meeting that morning.

It was RESOLVED that the original motion put by Councillor Apel, that the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2021 and 15 November 2021, be approved and adopted.

51 REVIEW OF CURRENT CITY COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

The Council considered the Town Clerk's report and he reminded Councillors that, following a legal challenge, the Court had confirmed that executive decisions needed to be made at meetings held physically. The Government had cited lack of Parliamentary time to consider an extension of the remote meeting arrangements post the deadline they had set of early May 2021.

The Town Clerk had hoped for a three-phased approach, ie: face-to-face meetings, remote meetings, or hybrid meetings. However, this had not transpired. The Town Clerk said that the decision rested solely with members but that whatever decision was made may need to be re-visited with the ever-changing Covid-19 restrictions.

Councillor Gershater had been in contact with members of the NHS which indicated that a lateral flow test would need to be taken prior to close contact at meetings.

Councillor Apel added that a lateral flow test was a stipulation for attending meetings at Chichester District Council.

Councillor Quail said that she was anxious that we continued our lives as normally as we could and was in favour of returning to-face-face meetings with the relevant precautions being taken.

If the Council returned to face-to-face meetings, the Town Clerk asked that, if Councillors became aware of significant public attendance at meetings to make that knowledge widely available so that, if needs be, alternative venues could be explored.

Councillor Gaskin was concerned about the Omicron variant being more transmissible than other variants. Councillor Gershater said that it was anticipated that the infectivity value would be 3 by February 2022 indicating that this was an exponential rise.

Councillor Dignum commented on the effectiveness of the current system of holding meetings.

Councillor Scicluna sought flexibility based on the changing situation of Covid-19. Councillor Barrie was in favour of the current system which she said was working well.

It was therefore proposed, seconded and put to the vote that from the next cycle of meetings a face-to-face approach for meetings be implemented. The vote was 3 in favour, 6 against. Councillor Scicluna abstained from voting. Therefore, the motion was defeated and it was RESOLVED that from the next cycle of meetings, Council meetings be held face-to-face and Committee/Working Groups be held remotely for the foreseeable future.

## 52 REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor Apel, as the City Council's representative on the St Wilfrid's Trust said that the new Vicar had taken the decision to disband the trust and that any monies left be used for other work within the parish. Councillor Apel further commented, as the City Council's representative on the Chichester Welfare Trust, on the continued good work carried out for those most in need.

Councillor Scicluna, as the City Council's representative on the Friends of Valletta, commented on a very successful hybrid talk held within the Assembly Room. The talk had been streamed to Malta, Los Angeles, Oregon and Canada.

Councillor Quail, as the City Council's representative on BID, was pleased to note the 70% vote in favour of BID. She commented on the very successful lights switch on held on 27 November 2021. Councillor Quail further commented as the City Council's representative on the Friends of Ravenna, that they had had two Committee meetings which had been very successful and the 2022/23 programme was now in preparation.

## 53 WARD REPORTS FROM CHICHESTER CITY COUNCILLORS

Councillor Quail, West Ward, and Chair of the Westgate Residents Association, said that they were awaiting news on the southern access road with some trepidation. Their hopes were to hear something this year but they had been advised by West Sussex County Council this could be changed at the pre-application stage.

Councillor Apel, West Ward, advised of meetings with Community Wardens which continued to be very useful and informative.

The Mayor, East Ward, was pleased to note that vandalism in his area had now decreased.

54 REPORTS FROM CHICHESTER DISTRICT AND WEST SUSSEX COUNTY  
COUNCIL'S WARD MEMBERS

The Mayor requested that for the future, all City Councillors who were also members of Chichester District and West Sussex County Councils, submit a written report prior to attendance at City Council meetings.

West Sussex County Councillor Simon Oakley commenting on the River Lavant said that bank reinforcement works were being undertaken on the Westhampnett Road bank, downstream of the river roundabout. Further investigations were anticipated looking at the stability of the bank in the long-term.

Councillor Oakley said that Swanfield Drive and Berwick Road were scheduled for repair works and hedge cutting-back in the new year. He said that the County Council continued work on the A259 study for Westhampnett Road and mentioned the Oving cross road lights junction. He commented on the community highway schemes and watershed schemes to bring forward works of local importance, eg: Boxgrove Parish Council had various community highway schemes, together with other parishes in the county. He hoped that the City Council would support the Community Highways Scheme to assist the Lidl footpath link project.

Councillor Apel, as Chair of the CDC Overview and Scrutiny Committee, said that a meeting was being held in January 2022 at which a senior Police Officer would be in attendance and that should any members have questions, to email these to her prior to the meeting.

Councillor Dignum as cabinet member for Growth, Place and Regeneration said that the Ravenna Point 6 large units were now fully let. The Enterprise Centre at the Tesco end of Terminus Road was now 95% let. He said that the former St James Industrial Estate had now been completely levelled and re-built and it was anticipated that the small units built would be opened in September 2022. It was hoped to attract the smaller investment businesses to the area.

Councillor Dignum who chaired the Chichester Vision Steering Group said that meetings were being held together with the Theatre, University, College and the Cathedral. Discussions were ongoing on how to improve the experience of the city such as events, markets, and cultural events including celebrating the anniversary of the theatre in 2022.

Councillor Dignum said that work was ongoing to encourage retailers to come into the city. The Government's relaxation of the planning restrictions for shops, where shops did not now need to be kept as retail and could be for any other reasonable use was very beneficial. Also, rents were decreasing, and a rateable re-evaluation would be held in the future, reflecting the lower rents, which would be particularly beneficial for independent businesses. Covered markets for the future were also being explored.

55 QUESTIONS

There were no questions from Members of Council pursuant to Standing Order 8.

56 COMMON SEAL

RESOLVED that the Common Seal be affixed to any documents necessary to give effect to the resolutions passed at this meeting.

The meeting closed at 3.25pm